

PROPOSALS to Encrease SEAMEN for the Service and Defence of ENGLAND.

IT being an undeniably Truth, That the English Navies heretofore, when they did not require above 10 or 15 Thousand Men, sufficiently to Man Them, and had able Seamen enough to compleat that Equipage; did not use to be Sickly.

It will easily be believ'd, That the Infirmities that have attended our Fleet these 3 or 4 last Years, have arose from the Nastiness of the many Landmen that have been sent out of the several Counties, to be put on Board them. For Remedy whereof, I know no other Right Expedient but the Breeding more Seamen.

A Worthy Gentleman in a late Treatise, offers at a Project for the Manning the Navy, by Obliging several Persons, under their several Circumstances, to provide so many Able Seamen for Their Majesties Service, or else to be subject to certain Penalties; and they must provide them upon such Terms as they can agree with the said Seamen; and still these Seamen, in probability, are but the same, that either would have gone voluntarily on Board, or might have been Press'd into Their Majesties Service, and consequently there will be so many the fewer to go on Board voluntarily, or to be Press'd, which in effect, is but hiring so many of the present Seamen.

Whereas, I humbly conceive, nothing but a Project to Breed Seamen, well Executed, will make this Nation Glorious upon the Sea.

I cannot be of the Opinion, as I perceive some People are, That a Ship Mann'd with $\frac{2}{3}$ parts Seamen, and Landmen; most of which cannot forbear Vomiting, nor have the command of their Legs to go upon the Deck and do it over the Gunnel of the Ship, but empty themselves every way, either between Decks or in the Hold, to the great Annoyance of all the rest of the Crew, who are hereby exposed to so many Diseases, as have appeared in the late Years Expeditions of the Royal Fleets.

But I humbly conceive, That if they had left all the raw Landmen ashore, and gon to Sea with only their Seamen, and such as were Masters of Sea-Legs and Sea-Stomachs, they might probably have escaped the Diseases which were bred on Board by the Nastiness of the others, and consequently have been much better Mann'd; wherefore I will humbly offer two Remedies which, I hope, will seem Effectual.

First, That all Watermen that now by the Institution of their Corporations must have but one Apprentice, and that not until they have been 7 Years out of their Time, may take two at least, and take them as soon as they please, after they are out of their Time; and this, I hope, will be no hardship upon any Body, because the present Freemen will have the immediate Benefit thereby, and Widows, who have but one Servant each, and that Servant Press'd into the Fleet, and consequently are left destitute of Maintenance, until the Ship comes to be paid off, may take another Apprentice in the mean time to work for her Livelyhood.

And tho' it is true, that the Apprentices which shall be now taken, will not be big enough to go on Board the Men of War under 3 or 4 Years, yet these will serve to Row upon the Thames, whilst a gteat many others, who are now kept at home, may be spared to go aboard.

Secondly, That all Ships using the Coal-Trade, either to England or Wales, Coastwaies, shall carry one Landman for Their Majesties Service, for every Score of chaldron of Coals that they shall take on Board; these Landmen to be supplied, either by Pressing, or such as shall voluntarily go on Board to learn to be Seamen; and after Six Months being on Board, or sooner, if it shall be thought fit (when they have got Sea-Legs and Sea-Stomachs) to be removed into Their Majesties Ships of War for Gromets, to receive 18s. per Month for their Pay, at first, until they can do a Seamans Labour, and then to have the Pay of Able Seamen.

In the mean time to be allow'd 4d. per Diem to find themselves Cloaths, and other 4d. per Diem to be allow'd the Master of the Collier, towards each Man's Victuals. And supposing the Victuals will cost the Master another 4d. per Diem, it's presum'd that he will be no loser thereby, because he will carry so many Seamen the less, as will more than countervail that Charge.

As for Example, It's a general Custom amongst the Colliers (as I am Inform'd) to carry a Seaman to every Score of Coals of the Ships Burthen; now a Ship of 16 Score, that useth to carry 16 Seamen at 6 or 7l. a Man for each Voyage, which is usually made in 6, 7, 8, 9, or 10 Weeks, having 16 Landmen on Board, will abate at least 4 of his Seamen, which at 6l. per Voyage, stands him in 24l. Whereas 4d. per Diem towards the Victuals of 16 Men for 10 Weeks, will amount to but 18l. 13s. 4d. So that if the Voyage prove 10 Weeks long, yet the Master will be a Gainer, by having the Landmen on Board, 5l. 6s. 8d. and proportionably more, according to the shortness of the Voyage. Besides, they will have the Conveniency of Defending their Ships against private Men of War, if they furnish themselves well with small Arms.

Now for the Raizing the Money for defraying the Charges of 4d. per Diem to each Man for Cloaths, and the 4d. per Diem, which Their Majesties are to pay for Victuals.

For as much as the Colliers will have some Advantage by the breeding these Seamen, as well as their share of the general Benefit that will accrue, by bringing down the present extravagant Wages of Seamen, when their number increaseth Yearly; and that a small Tax upon Coals, is as insensible, as upon any other Commodity whatsoever.

It is humbly Proposed, That there should be 1s. per chaldron, London-Measure, laid upon all Coals shipp'd off in all the Ports of England and Wales, which being 420000 chaldron, or thereabouts, per Annum; according to a late Computation, will raise 21000l. per Annum, and 1500 Men to be always Maintain'd at Sea at 8d. per Diem, will cost 18249l. 3s. 4d. so there may be 2750l. 16s. 8d. per Annum, towards the Charges of Management, which I conceive sufficient, because the Collectors of the Customs, will probably be contented to receive and pay the Money to the Men, tot a Penny in the Pound; and this Service will require no great Officers; good Boatwains, Mates, and such kind of Robustick Persons, will be the fittest Agents for this Affair, and such will think themselves well paid with 40 or 50l. per Annum, besides their Charges, which will not be very much over and above the Charges of the Constables, and such as shall by Warrant of the Justice of the Peace, Impress and bring down Men to the Ports; where each Agent must have a Boat and Boatmen allow'd at such constant Sallaries as shall be thought convenient by 2 or 3 proper Persons that shall be Constituted, to Direct the Affair; of which number, the Author of this Proposition desires not to be one, he having already as much of Their Majesties Busines, under his Care and Management, as he can possibly Dispatch.

These Two Expedients, being well Executed, in 2 or 3 Years time, there will be no want of Seamen, either for Their Majesties Ships, or for Merchantmen; the last only Supplying Annually 3000 Men, by removing 1500, half Yearly, while the Young Watermen are growing up: And by this means will be prevented the vast Charge, at which the Roval Navy lies in Port, every Spring, for want of Sailers to Man Their Majesties Ships: Besides, the Cities and Countries will be eas'd of a great many Idle Fellows; nor will Lazy, Sawcy, Debauch'd Servants be so plenty, as now they are. For all which Reasons, if it shall not be thought convenient to Raise the Money for Breeding up Seamen upon the Coal-Trade, then it may be worth Consideration, by what other way to raise so small a Sum to supply a Matter so much for the Nations Safeguard and Advantage.

Nevertheless, humbly Submitting to better Judgments.

Note. That notwithstanding, in the fore-going Proposal, the Calculation is made for the Colliers, to carry after the rate of One Landman for every Score chaldron of Coals; yet upon Practice it will appear, That they need not carry above One Landman for every Two Score chaldron, for the Breeding up of but 1500 Men every Six Months.